

The Influence of New Generation Employees' Perception of "The Commuter" on Work Attitudes and Behaviors

Jie Shi ^{1,a}, Teng Zhao ^{2,b}

¹ College of Economics and Management, Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Nanjing, 210016, China.

² Shanghai Aerospace Control Technology Institute, Shanghai, 201100, China.

^a shijienuaa@nuaa.edu.cn, ^b 15651801507@163.com

Abstract. In recent years, the term "The Commuter" has spread all over the internet, which has aroused resonance of new generation employees, and also attracted the attention of managers. Therefore, this research selects new generation of employees as the research target and conduct an exploratory study on the research question of "the influence of new generation of employees' perceptions of 'The Commuter' on their work attitudes and behaviors" through in-depth interviews. Firstly, the subjects were interviewed in-depth by snowball sampling, secondly, the interview data were coded and analyzed, finally, the mechanism model was constructed. This research provides a new perspective and provides practical reference for managers.

Keywords: New generation employees; work attitude; work behavior.

1. Introduction

With the 2020 one of the year's top 10 hot words "The Commuter" of the explosion, an increasing number of new generation of employees jokingly called themselves "The Commuter". First of all, the term "The Commuter" to some extent reflects the new generation of employees to their own work identity, and a self-deprecation of a new generation of workers under the pressure of both workplace competition and the burdens of life. Secondly, the employees' work attitudes and behaviors will be influenced and restricted by the social environment at that time[1]. As the first generation of employees to grow up after the implementation of the one-child policy, their personalities and styles are completely different from those of their parents, their education gives them a more distinctive character of their own. Thirdly, the new generation of employees is different from the older generation of employees to seek stability in the traditional work concept, in order to obtain better career development in the work of high turnover, job hopping, in recent years, the frequent occurrence of "naked resignation" reflects the behavior of the new generation of employees under pressure.

The new generation of employees has gradually become the main force of China's labor market, so this research will start from the perspective of the "The Commuter" perception of the new generation of employees, in this perspective of their work attitude and conduct research. This article mainly answers the following three questions: First, what is the concept of "The Commuter" perception? Second, is it a common phenomenon for the new generation of employees to feel that they belong to "The Commuter"? Third, what are the effects of the "The Commuter" perception on the work attitudes and behaviors of the new generation employees?

Based on the social hot spots and the background of the times, this research discusses the concept of "The Commuter" perception of the new generation of employees through qualitative research, and helps people to better understand the "The Commuter" perception. This research also discusses the universality of this perception in the new generation of workers, hoping to test the relationship between this perception and their work attitudes and behaviors.

2. Literature Review

At this stage, the new generation of employees, represented by the post-80s and post-90s in China, has started to become the main force among the employees of enterprises[1]. With their good knowledge, skills and innovative abilities, the new generation of employees have become a valuable resource for the growth and development of enterprises and have a certain influence in the workplace[2]. They need to develop tailored HRM solutions[3]. In previous academic studies, some domestic scholars have used the work values perspective as an entry point and found that, in addition to some utilitarian factors, intrinsic preferences, interpersonal harmony[4], innovation orientation, room for future growth and positive work values all have a significant positive effect on the work behavior of the new generation of employees. This is a significant positive effect on work behavior. In terms of ways to promote positive work behavior among the new generation, some scholars have studied the characteristics of the new generation and suggested ways to improve the work environment, innovate motivational methods and change leadership styles[5].

Although scholars at home and abroad have conducted some studies on the factors affecting employees' work attitudes and behaviors from different perspectives, some of them are from a single perspective such as work values[6]. Some of them are only oriented towards single occupational group surveys, and due to the differences in sample subjects and the changing social environment, many of the existing research findings still need to be further explored and improved. Existing studies in the academic literature mainly analyze the identity of the new generation of migrant workers from different perspectives. From a sociological perspective, Yue believes that the identity of the new generation of migrant workers is binary, in which personal income and family environment, social security and social rights, social acceptance and community participation influence the identity of the new generation of migrant workers[7]. From the perspective of economics and management, the economic and managerial perspectives on the identity of the new generation of migrant workers mainly refer to the impact of the identity status of the new generation of migrant workers on the state of economic development and the degree of job embeddedness[8]. Zhao's research shows that there is a significant correlation between identity and job embeddedness[9].

3. Study Design

3.1 Research Methodology

This research is conducted through a qualitative research method, specifically using in-depth interviews to explore which new generation employees' work attitudes and behaviors are influenced[10]. As interview research requires in-depth and detailed information, the snowball sampling method was used to conduct in-depth interviews with the research participants[11], then the interview data was coded and analyzed, and finally a mechanistic model of the influence of the new generation's perceptions of "The Commuter" on work attitudes and behaviors was constructed.

In response to the first question, scholars have not yet reached a consensus on the concept of the perception of "The Commuter", as the term "The Commuter" has not been expanded for a long time. In the second question, this research will conduct in-depth interviews with the research participants to investigate the strength of the new generation of employees' self-perception of "The Commuter" and whether they think others around them also have the perception of "The Commuter", in order to find out whether this phenomenon is common among the new generation of employees. The third question was to find out whether this phenomenon was common among the new generation. In the third question, the research will collect data through in-depth interviews to explore the impact of the new generation's perception of "The Commuter" on their work attitudes and behaviors, including which work attitudes and behaviors are affected by this perception.

3.2 Study Sample

In this research, we selected 20 new generation employees who were born between 1980 and 1999, have received higher education, have a permanent workplace, have their current job salary as their main source of financial income and have been employed for two years (inclusive) or more. In order to make the results more accurate and representative, respondents were required to have some work experience in the workplace and a basic understanding of their industry and workplace.

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 The Prevalence of the Perception of "The Commuter"

After eliminating irrelevant content, 244 valid interview transcripts were obtained. By coding the interview transcripts in three steps: open coding, axial coding and selective coding, the research develops an understanding of the concept of "The Commuter" and a model of the influence of new generation employees' perception of "The Commuter" on work attitudes and behaviors.

The second part of the interview focused on collecting the new generation's understanding of the term itself and of the perception of "The Commuter". All respondents were aware of the term, 80% of them positively identified themselves as "The Commuter", 10% identified themselves as not "The Commuter" and 10% were somewhat ambiguous, identifying themselves sometimes as "The Commuter" and sometimes not. Among all the respondents, 75% of them had thought and acted of jumping from one job to another; 80% of people think their colleagues or friends are also "The commuter"; when extracting concepts, some high-frequency terms such as work motivation, work initiative, salary satisfaction, work pressure and overtime etc. emerged.

Although more than 80% of the new generation of employees have a strong perception of "Commuter", they are more cautious in their attitude towards job hopping due to the pressure and constraints in various aspects of life. They have more opportunities for trial and error, so they have a stronger idea of leaving their jobs and changing careers; compared to the new generation of post-90s employees, the new generation of post-80s employees have a more conservative attitude. Therefore, although they are not satisfied with the status quo, it is very costly for them to change jobs or even change careers.

Open coding is the process of conceptualizing and categorizing the information collected. After deleting irrelevant expressions, the final open-ended coding yielded 47 concepts. By eliminating invalid and repeated concepts and merging them, a total of nine categories were obtained, namely work engagement, negative emotions, economic status, self-orientation, perceived security, competence growth, interpersonal relationships, life emotions and creative thinking. The axial coding formed external environmental factors, self-emotional factors and work attitudes. In order to further explore the relationship between the new generation of employees' perceptions of "The Commuter" and their attitudes and behaviors at work, the selective coding style continuously compares and analyzes primary sources, concepts, categories and especially category relationships, and outlines the context in a "story line" manner the overall story framework is thus completed. The structure and connotations of the category relations for the perceptions and work attitudes and behaviors of the "The Commuter" in this research are shown in Table I.

Table I

Category Relationship Structure	The connotation of relationships
Perception of "The Commuter" Work attitude Work behavior	Perceptions of "The Commuter" influence the work attitudes and therefore the work behaviors of the new generation of employees.
Perception of "The Commuter" Work attitude Work behavior Self-emotional factors	Self-emotional factors influence the strength of the relationship between the new generation of employees' perceptions of being "The Commuter" and their attitudes to work, which in turn influence their work behaviors.

Perception of "The Commuter" Work attitude Work behavior External environmental factors	External environmental factors influence the strength of the relationship between the new generation's perceptions of being "The Commuter" and their attitudes to work, which in turn influence their work behaviors.
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

4.2 The Influence of Perceptions of "The Commuter" on Work Attitudes and Behaviors

Before the model was constructed, firstly, by collating the interviewees' responses in the interview questionnaire to clarify the prevalence of the perception of "The Commuter" and the perception of "The Commuter", based on these contents, the dependent variable of "The Commuter" was proposed. Secondly, by coding and collating the respondents' responses in the interview questions, the categories related to work attitudes and work behaviors were initially refined from the original statements, such as negative emotions and work engagement, etc. In the process of further refining the categories, it was found that external environmental factors and self-emotional factors play an important role in "The Commuter". Finally, based on the above description of the relationship between the categories in the universal and selective coding of the perception of "The Commuter", this research proposes that the "The Commuter" of the new generation of employees play a certain moderating role in the relationship between the perception of "The Commuter" and their work attitudes and behaviors. The conceptual model of the influence of new generation employees' perceptions of "The Commuter" on their work attitudes and behaviors is shown in Figure 1.

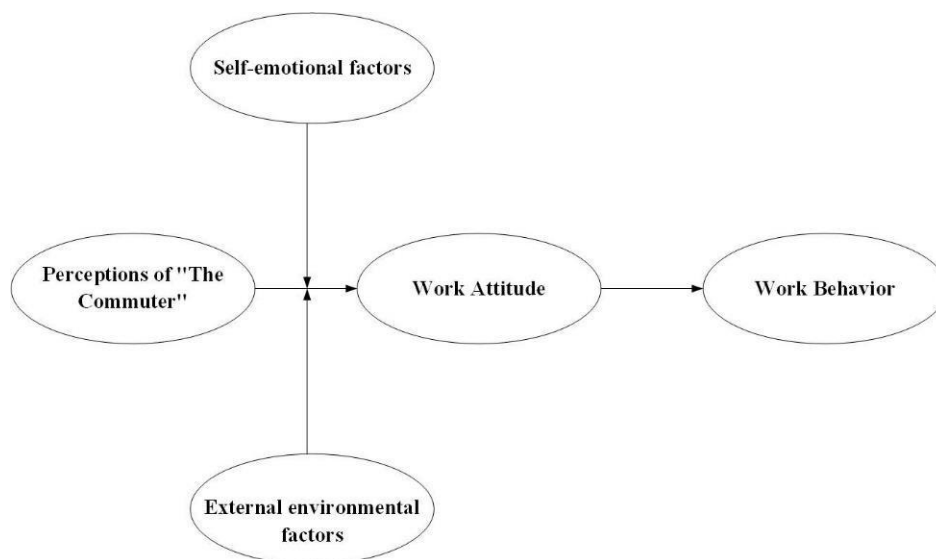


Figure 1.

In the model, new generation employees' perceptions of "The Commuter" influence their work behaviors, and "The Commuter" perceptions influence work behaviors through the mediating variable of their work attitudes, in which self-emotional factors and external environmental factors influence the strength of the relationship between "The Commuter" perceptions and work attitudes. In this process, self-emotional and external environmental factors influence the relationship between perceptions of "The Commuter" and work attitudes by affecting the strength of the relationship. The study found that self-emotional factors and external environmental factors were significant moderating variables in the influence of "The Commuter" perceptions on work attitudes. The more positive the new generation employees' self-emotional factors are, the more positive their work attitudes will be, thus positively influencing their work behaviors, i.e. although these new generation employees have the perception of "The Commuter", this perception will motivate them to overcome their work difficulties and turn pressure into motivation, thus achieving better work output. Conversely, the more negative the new generation's self-emotional factors are, the more

negative their attitudes to work will be, which in turn will reduce their motivation to work. The more positive the external work environment is, the more positive their work attitude will be, thus positively influencing their work behavior, i.e. the new generation employees are in a good work environment, with good relations between leaders and colleagues, and a comfortable office environment.

Based on the existing literature and in-depth interviews with the respondents, this research finds that the perception of "The Commuter" is a common phenomenon among the new generation of employees. The study also found that the main characteristic of new generation employees who do not have the perception of being a "commuter" is that they are more satisfied with their current work and life situation, they enjoy the sense of achievement brought by their current work, they have a high interest in their work, they have a very good cooperation relationship with their supervisors and colleagues, and they are generally able to have a good work-life balance.

In addition, through the analysis of the interviews, the question "What is the perception of 'The Commuter'?" The prerequisite is that the interviewees are aware of the term "The Commuter" and that it has been expanded; the second prerequisite is that there are unhappiness factors affecting them in their current job, including three dimensions: pay satisfaction, propensity to leave and job burnout. Although not all people are negative and pessimistic under the perception of being a "Commuter", almost every respondent who considers themselves to be a "Commuter" has some degree of dissatisfaction with their current job; there is also a perception that more than half of the people around them have a perception of being a "Commuter".

5. Conclusion and Discussion

First, it provides a new perspective for studying the work attitudes and behaviors of the new generation of employees. This research explores and constructs a model of the mechanism by which the new generation of employees' perception of "The Commuter" affects their work attitudes and behaviors, which helps to better understand the perception of "The Commuter". Based on the literature review and the coding-based logical derivation, the conceptual model of this research is initially proposed, in which the perception of "The Commuter" has a positive influence on work attitudes and work attitudes have a positive influence on work behaviors.

Secondly, we identified and analyzed the role of self-emotional factors and external environmental factors in moderating the relationship between the perceptions and work attitudes of new generation employees, and found that the stronger the positive aspects reflected by self-emotional factors and external environmental factors, the more positive the work attitudes of employees.

Finally, the construction of this research model is mainly based on the analysis of previous literature and the interview of some candidates, and there is no in-depth empirical research it is hoped that future studies will increase the sample size and expand the research areas, so that the study can be more representative and accurate. Although this research follows the coding process, the conclusions of are still preliminary. In future research, it is hoped that research subjects from different backgrounds and occupations can be added, so as to enrich and improve the model proposed in this study on the mechanism of the impact of the perception of "The Commuter" on work attitudes and behaviors of new generation employees.

References

- [1] Z. H. Deng, and W. Z. Chen. An empirical study on the influence of parental leadership on employees' work attitudes and behaviors - using job satisfaction as a mediating variable. Journal of Dalian University of Technology (Social Science Edition), 2013.
- [2] Y. P. Li, and T. Xia. Modeling the relationship between new generation employees' self-differences and their work attitudes and behaviors. East China Economic Management, 2014, 28: 128-131.

- [3] H. Wang. Research on the management of employees' work attitude and work behavior. Finance and Economics, 2015.
- [4] Z. M. Li, and S. M. Zhao. Mechanisms of strategic leadership behaviors on employees' work attitudes - a perspective based on the climate of labor-management relations. East China Economic Management, 2015.
- [5] X. Hu, Y. P. Li, and H. J. Li. New generation of employees: positive or angry? A study of satisfaction generation mechanisms based on work values. Economic Management, 2017, 7: 96-97.
- [6] Y. P. Li, and X. F. Hou. The structure of new generation employees' work values and the mechanism of their influence on work behavior. Economic Management, 2012, 5: 77-86.
- [7] Z. Z. Yue. A study on the status quo and factors influencing the identity of new generation migrant workers in China. Northwest Population, 2011, 32(6): 96-100.
- [8] C. Song, and J. C. Chen. Management and motivation of the new generation of "post-80s and post-90s" employees. Human Resource Management, 2011, 3: 92-93.
- [9] T. Zhao. Research on the influence of new generation migrant workers' identity on job embeddedness. Nanjing: Nanjing University, 2011.
- [10] Gerhard. Sociological Theory and Work Behavior: Roles of Work Values and Political Skill in Job Performance and Promotability Assessment. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 2011, 78: 136-148.
- [11] M. Fishbein. Work Values and Job Satisfaction. Journal of Applied Psychology, 1998, 53: 456-459.